

Section 6. National Security and Interception Procedures

5-6-1. National Security

- a. National security in the control of air traffic is governed by 14 CFR Part 99.
- b. All aircraft entering domestic U.S. airspace from points outside must provide for identification prior to entry. To facilitate early aircraft identification of all aircraft in the vicinity of U.S. and international airspace boundaries, Air Defense Identification Zones (ADIZ) have been established.

REFERENCE-

AIM, ADIZ Boundaries and Designated Mountainous Areas,
Paragraph [5-6-5](#).

c. Operational requirements for aircraft operations associated with an ADIZ are as follows:

1. Flight Plan. Except as specified in subparagraphs [d](#) and [e](#) below, an IFR or DVFR flight plan must be filed with an appropriate aeronautical facility as follows:

- (a) Generally, for all operations that enter an ADIZ.
- (b) For operations that will enter or exit the U.S. and which will operate into, within or across the Contiguous U.S. ADIZ regardless of true airspeed.
- (c) The flight plan must be filed before departure except for operations associated with the Alaskan ADIZ when the airport of departure has no facility for filing a flight plan, in which case the flight plan may be filed immediately after takeoff or when within range of the aeronautical facility.

2. Two-way Radio. For the majority of operations associated with an ADIZ, an operating two-way radio is required. See 14 CFR Section 99.1 for exceptions.

3. Transponder Requirements. Unless otherwise authorized by ATC, each aircraft conducting operations into, within, or across the Contiguous U.S. ADIZ must be equipped with an operable radar beacon transponder having altitude reporting capability (Mode C), and that transponder must be turned on and set to reply on the appropriate code or as assigned by ATC.

4. Position Reporting.

- (a) **For IFR flight.** Normal IFR position reporting.
- (b) **For DVFR flights.** The estimated time of ADIZ penetration must be filed with the aeronautical facility at least 15 minutes prior to penetration except for flight in the Alaskan

ADIZ, in which case report prior to penetration.

(c) For inbound aircraft of foreign registry. The pilot must report to the aeronautical facility at least one hour prior to ADIZ penetration.

5. Aircraft Position Tolerances.

(a) Over land, the tolerance is within plus or minus five minutes from the estimated time over a reporting point or point of penetration and within 10 NM from the centerline of an intended track over an estimated reporting point or penetration point.

(b) Over water, the tolerance is plus or minus five minutes from the estimated time over a reporting point or point of penetration and within 20 NM from the centerline of the intended track over an estimated reporting point or point of penetration (to include the Aleutian Islands).

6. Land-Based ADIZ. Land-Based ADIZ are activated and deactivated over U.S. metropolitan areas as needed, with dimensions, activation dates and other relevant information disseminated via NOTAM.

(a) In addition to requirements outlined in subparagraphs [c1](#) through [c3](#), pilots operating within a Land-Based ADIZ must report landing or leaving the Land-Based ADIZ if flying too low for radar coverage.

(b) Pilots unable to comply with all requirements shall remain clear of Land-Based ADIZ. Pilots entering a Land-Based ADIZ without authorization or who fail to follow all requirements risk interception by military fighter aircraft.

d. Except when applicable under 14 CFR Section 99.7, 14 CFR Part 99 does not apply to aircraft operations:

1. Within the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia, or within the State of Alaska, and remains within 10 miles of the point of departure;

2. Over any island, or within three nautical miles of the coastline of any island, in the Hawaii ADIZ; or

3. Associated with any ADIZ other than the Contiguous U.S. ADIZ, when the aircraft true airspeed is less than 180 knots.

e. Authorizations to deviate from the requirements of Part 99 may also be granted by the ARTCC, on a local basis, for some operations associated with an ADIZ.

f. An airfiled VFR Flight Plan makes an aircraft subject to interception for positive identification when entering an ADIZ. Pilots are, therefore, urged to file the required DVFR flight plan either in person or by telephone prior to departure.

g. Special Security Instructions.

1. During defense emergency or air defense emergency conditions, additional special security instructions may be issued in accordance with the Security Control of Air Traffic and Air Navigation Aids (SCATANA) Plan.
2. Under the provisions of the SCATANA Plan, the military will direct the action to be taken-in regard to landing, grounding, diversion, or dispersal of aircraft and the control of air navigation aids in the defense of the U.S. during emergency conditions.
3. At the time a portion or all of SCATANA is implemented, ATC facilities will broadcast appropriate instructions received from the military over available ATC frequencies. Depending on instructions received from the military, VFR flights may be directed to land at the nearest available airport, and IFR flights will be expected to proceed as directed by ATC.
4. Pilots on the ground may be required to file a flight plan and obtain an approval (through FAA) prior to conducting flight operation.
5. In view of the above, all pilots should guard an ATC or FSS frequency at all times while conducting flight operations.

5-6-2. Interception Procedures

a. General.

1. Identification intercepts during peacetime operations are vastly different than those conducted under increased states of readiness. Unless otherwise directed by the control agency, intercepted aircraft will be identified by type only. When specific information is required (i.e., markings, serial numbers, etc.) the interceptor aircrew will respond only if the request can be conducted in a safe manner. During hours of darkness or Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC), identification of unknown aircraft will be by type only. The interception pattern described below is the typical peacetime method used by air interceptor aircrews. In all situations, the interceptor aircrew will use caution to avoid startling the intercepted aircrew and/or passengers.
2. All aircraft operating in the U.S. national airspace, if capable, will maintain a listening watch on VHF guard 121.5 or UHF 243.0. It is incumbent on all aviators to know and understand their responsibilities if intercepted. Additionally, if the U.S. military intercepts an aircraft and flares are dispensed in the area of that aircraft, aviators will pay strict attention, contact air traffic control immediately on the local frequency or on VHF guard 121.5 or UHF 243.0 and follow the intercept's visual ICAO signals. Be advised that noncompliance may result in the use of force.

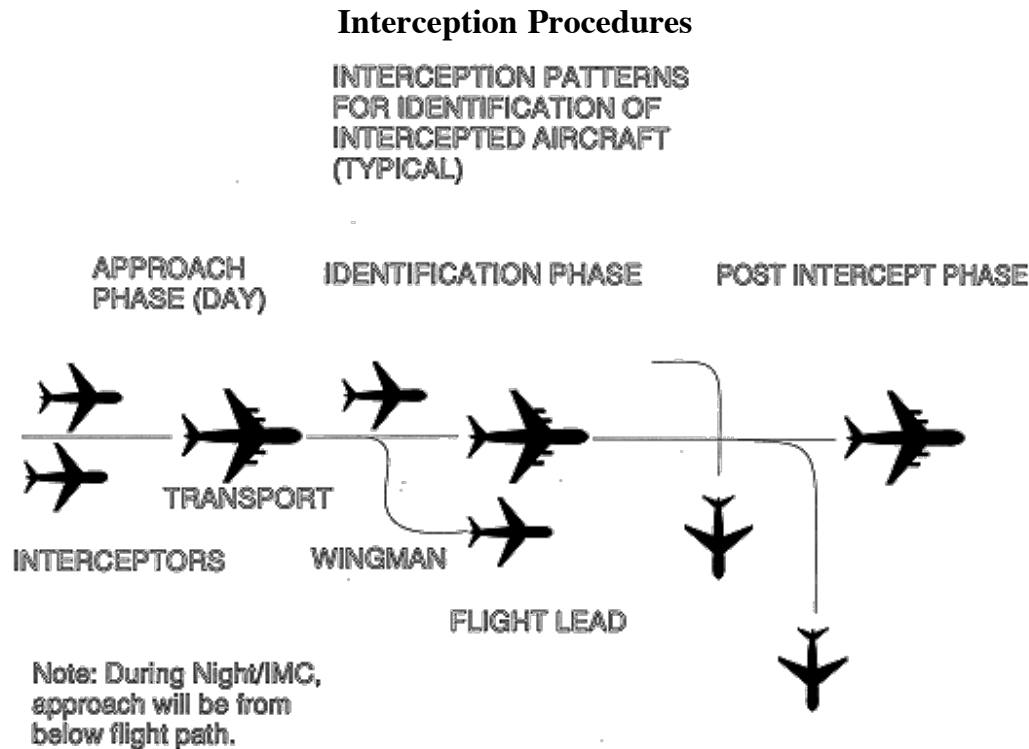
b. Intercept phases (See [FIG 5-6-1](#)).

1. Phase One- Approach Phase.

During peacetime, intercepted aircraft will be approached from the stern. Generally two interceptor aircraft will be employed to accomplish the identification. The flight leader and wingman will coordinate their individual positions in conjunction with the ground

controlling agency. Their relationship will resemble a line abreast formation. At night or in IMC, a comfortable radar trail tactic will be used. Safe vertical separation between interceptor aircraft and unknown aircraft will be maintained at all times.

FIG 5-6-1



2. Phase Two- Identification Phase.

The intercepted aircraft should expect to visually acquire the lead interceptor and possibly the wingman during this phase in visual meteorological conditions (VMC). The wingman will assume a surveillance position while the flight leader approaches the unknown aircraft. Intercepted aircraft personnel may observe the use of different drag devices to allow for speed and position stabilization during this phase. The flight leader will then initiate a gentle closure toward the intercepted aircraft, stopping at a distance no closer than absolutely necessary to obtain the information needed. The interceptor aircraft will use every possible precaution to avoid startling intercepted aircrew or passengers. Additionally, the interceptor aircrews will constantly keep in mind that maneuvers considered normal to a fighter aircraft may be considered hazardous to passengers and crews of nonfighter aircraft. When interceptor aircrews know or believe that an unsafe condition exists, the identification phase will be terminated. As previously stated, during darkness or IMC identification of unknown aircraft will be by type only. Positive vertical separation will be maintained by interceptor aircraft throughout this phase.

3. Phase Three- Post Intercept Phase.

Upon identification phase completion, the flight leader will turn away from the intercepted aircraft. The wingman will remain well clear and accomplish a rejoin with the leader.

c. Communication interface between interceptor aircrews and the ground controlling agency

is essential to ensure successful intercept completion. Flight Safety is paramount. An aircraft which is intercepted by another aircraft shall immediately:

1. Follow the instructions given by the intercepting aircraft, interpreting and responding to the visual signals.
2. Notify, if possible, the appropriate air traffic services unit.
3. Attempt to establish radio communication with the intercepting aircraft or with the appropriate intercept control unit, by making a general call on the emergency frequency 243.0 MHz and repeating this call on the emergency frequency 121.5 MHz, if practicable, giving the identity and position of the aircraft and the nature of the flight.
4. If equipped with SSR transponder, select Mode 3/A Code 7700, unless otherwise instructed by the appropriate air traffic services unit. If any instructions received by radio from any sources conflict with those given by the intercepting aircraft by visual or radio signals, the intercepted aircraft shall request immediate clarification while continuing to comply with the instructions given by the intercepting aircraft.

5-6-3. Law Enforcement Operations by Civil and Military Organizations

a. Special law enforcement operations.

1. Special law enforcement operations include in-flight identification, surveillance, interdiction, and pursuit activities performed in accordance with official civil and/or military mission responsibilities.
2. To facilitate accomplishment of these special missions, exemptions from specified sections of the CFRs have been granted to designated departments and agencies. However, it is each organization's responsibility to apprise ATC of their intent to operate under an authorized exemption before initiating actual operations.
3. Additionally, some departments and agencies that perform special missions have been assigned coded identifiers to permit them to apprise ATC of ongoing mission activities and solicit special air traffic assistance.

5-6-4. Interception Signals

[TBL 5-6-1](#) and [TBL 5-6-2](#).

TBL 5-6-1

| Intercepting Signals | | | | |
|--|--|---------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| INTERCEPTING SIGNALS | | | | |
| Signals initiated by intercepting aircraft and responses by intercepted aircraft (as set forth in ICAO Annex 2-Appendix 1, 2.1) | | | | |
| Series | INTERCEPTING Aircraft Signals | Meaning | INTERCEPTED Aircraft Responds | Meaning |
| 1 | DAY-Rocking wings from a position slightly above and ahead of, and normally to | You have been | AEROPLANES: DAY-Rocking wings and | Understood, will |

| | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| | <p>the left of, the intercepted aircraft and, after acknowledgement, a slow level turn, normally to the left, on to the desired heading.</p> <p>NIGHT-Same and, in addition, flashing navigational lights at irregular intervals.</p> <p><i>NOTE 1-Meteorological conditions or terrain may require the intercepting aircraft to take up a position slightly above and ahead of, and to the right of, the intercepted aircraft and to make the subsequent turn to the right.</i></p> <p><i>NOTE 2-If the intercepted aircraft is not able to keep pace with the intercepting aircraft, the latter is expected to fly a series of race-track patterns and to rock its wings each time it passes the intercepted aircraft.</i></p> | intercepted. Follow me. | <p>following.</p> <p>NIGHT-Same and, in addition, flashing navigational lights at irregular intervals.</p> <p>HELICOPTERS: DAY or NIGHT-Rocking aircraft, flashing navigational lights at irregular intervals and following.</p> | comply. |
| 2 | DAY or NIGHT-An abrupt break-away maneuver from the intercepted aircraft consisting of a climbing turn of 90 degrees or more without crossing the line of flight of the intercepted aircraft. | You may proceed. | <p>AEROPLANES: DAY or NIGHT-Rocking wings.</p> <p>HELICOPTERS: DAY or NIGHT-Rocking aircraft.</p> | Understood, will comply. |
| 3 | <p>DAY-Circling aerodrome, lowering landing gear and overflying runway in direction of landing or, if the intercepted aircraft is a helicopter, overflying the helicopter landing area.</p> <p>NIGHT-Same and, in addition, showing steady landing lights.</p> | Land at this aerodrome. | <p>AEROPLANES: DAY-Lowering landing gear, following the intercepting aircraft and, if after overflying the runway landing is considered safe, proceeding to land.</p> <p>NIGHT-Same and, in addition, showing steady landing lights (if carried).</p> <p>HELICOPTERS: DAY or NIGHT-Following the intercepting aircraft and proceeding to land, showing a steady landing light (if carried).</p> | Understood, will comply. |

TBL 5-6-2

Intercepting Signals

Intercepting Signals

INTERCEPTING SIGNALS

Signals and Responses During Aircraft Intercept

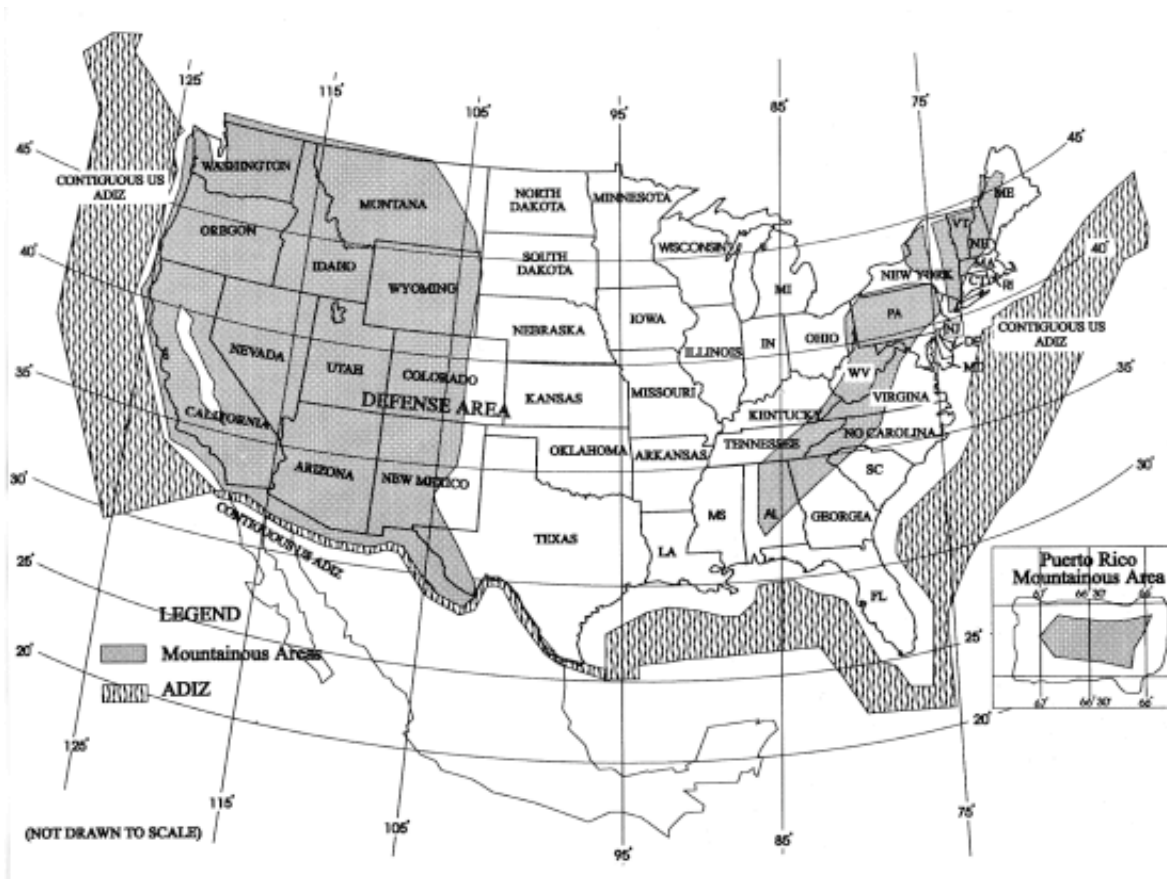
| Signals initiated by intercepted aircraft and responses by intercepting aircraft (as set forth in ICAO Annex 2-Appendix 1, 2.2) | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Series | INTERCEPTED Aircraft Signals | Meaning | INTERCEPTING Aircraft Responds | Meaning |
| 4 | DAY or NIGHT-Raising landing gear (if fitted) and flashing landing lights while passing over runway in use or helicopter landing area at a height exceeding 300m (1,000 ft) but not exceeding 600m (2,000 ft) (in the case of a helicopter, at a height exceeding 50m (170 ft) but not exceeding 100m (330 ft) above the aerodrome level, and continuing to circle runway in use or helicopter landing area. If unable to flash landing lights, flash any other lights available. | Aerodrome you have designated is inadequate. | DAY or NIGHT-If it is desired that the intercepted aircraft follow the intercepting aircraft to an alternate aerodrome, the intercepting aircraft raises its landing gear (if fitted) and uses the Series 1 signals prescribed for intercepting aircraft. If it is decided to release the intercepted aircraft, the intercepting aircraft uses the Series 2 signals prescribed for intercepting aircraft. | Understood, follow me. Understood, you may proceed. |
| 5 | DAY or NIGHT-Regular switching on and off of all available lights but in such a manner as to be distinct from flashing lights. | Cannot comply. | DAY or NIGHT-Use Series 2 signals prescribed for intercepting aircraft. | Understood. |
| 6 | DAY or NIGHT-Irregular flashing of all available lights. | In distress. | DAY or NIGHT-Use Series 2 signals prescribed for intercepting aircraft. | Understood. |

5-6-5. ADIZ Boundaries and Designated Mountainous Areas

(See [FIG 5-6-2](#).)

FIG 5-6-2

Air Defense Identification Zone Boundaries Designated Mountainous Areas



| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Back to AIM Home Page | Go back to Chapter 5 Section 5 | Go to Chapter 6 Section 1 | Back to Top of this Page |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|